2

THE
WHITE ROSE
OF
VILNA.

A Poem,

WRITTEN ORIGINALLY IN THE POLISH TONGUE;

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

GOETHE,

Author of the SORROWS of WERTER, &c.

BY J. F. DENOVAN.

Jeder Jeungling sehnt zich so zu lieben,
Jedes Maedchen so geliebt zu sein ;
Ach! du heiligiste von unserm Trieben,
Warum quillt aus ihm die grimme pein ?

Anon.

Edinburgh.

1800.

THE WHITE ROSE

OR

VILLNA.

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VILNA, &c.

AH woe is my heart!—and sad is the theme of my song—Still'd be the rude breeze of the north—let whispering zephirs breathe the voice of sorrow—Mourn O, ye turtles of Dorwina, for the pride of your groves is no more:--Red be the waves of Daschwa, and darken'd the sun beam that gilds the lucid mirror.—Fallen is thy crest proud Lord of Winniski—low lies the fame of thy house and the pride of VILNA!—For thee I mourn O, heavenly Lexina—sound be thy slumbers in the arms of Polwatski——Sweetest flower of the light, faded is thy bloom and fallen the pride of the garden. Strike the mournful string

of sorrow O, Bard of VILNA——Sweet is the song of gratitude to the soul of sorrow.

Heavenly was the morn that blush'd thro' the groves of Dorwina—hush'd was the frowning storm on the streams of Daschwa, millifluous the little insects flitting o'er the wavy crystal.—Green were the banks of Koloatski bath'd in the dews of the morn, where bloom'd the lilly and the rose, and the restless ivy sought a wider bourne.—When all its little inhabitants awoke,—with dewy wings—the buzzing honey bee—the toilful ant, that roam'd exploring every opening flower, more sweet than storied HYBLA— When the Daughter of Winniski—the fair—the angelic Lexina—the WHITE ROSE of VILNA, left the pillow of care, to ruminate on her fate,—to breathe in the lone grove the voice of her misfortunes—to give release to the flood of sorrow—to unburden her distending heart—More melting than the plaintive turtle who has lost her beloved

mate, were the words of Lexina:—Ah! woe is me!—whether shall I wander—where shall this poor—this bursting heart unload the burden of its grief—ah! how canst thou smile most heavenly morn, sad dost thou remind me of the day that is past--Yes, ye glorious sun, when ye beheld me rejoicing in thy splendour with the little inhabitants of the grove—Yes, beauteous sun ye have witnessed the spring of my youth and the summer of my days —soon shall thy enliv'ning ray instruct the noisome nettle to shoot apace on the grave of Lexina!—The dark night-shade shall bloom at my head, and the snows of winter shall cover me.—Thrice happy Shepherdess--ah! little dost thou know the cares of Lexina—tranquillity is thy portion.--Happy lowly maid, prouder is thine heart than the daughter of Winniski. ——Ah! fatal grandeur what art thou, whence is thine origin—how long wilt thou torture me?--With what transports shall I welcome thee O, death—lay thy

leaden wand upon me, and free my groaning soul!—These groves are my fathers, they shelter the little birds, and they are happy.—Those lowly cottagers are his slaves, sweet peace is their inheritance, content is their dwelling—these groves are not Winniski's, happy slaves, they are thine!—Can the gilded court—can the glitt'ring board, or the routs of midnight revelry anticipate thy sweets, O, blest scenes of my youth?—Does the midnight wine enhale the balm of retirement, does the breath of the grove dwell in the lofty hall of Winniski?—Dost thou beauteous virgin of the light—Dost thou O, heavenly content ever visit the chambers of the great?—Didst thou ever know the Lord of Winniski? Ye lowly cottagers well may ye smile--Thrice happy slaves—ah! cruel Heav'ns why am I the daughter of Winniski?" Her heart could only speak—her blue eyes distill'd the tear of sorrow—she paced with careless steps to the grove of Daschwa—

The well known beech greets her streaming eye—her heart was bursting—— "Here, did I part with thee beloved Polwatzki,—here in the smooth Bark didst thou carve the name of Lexina—shall I never see thee more—life of my life, beloved of my soul?" She reclin'd her white head to the stalk of the green beech, while the burning flood bath'd her lovely cheek.—She started from her lethargy, a loud roar sounded thro' the grove; a huge wolf came rushing thro' the briars--he spied the lovely Lexina--his eyes flashed with vivid fire,—he flew towards her—she lifted her blue eyes to heaven—her heart shrunk to its base--she fell lifeless to the earth!—A loud report open'd her deathful eyes—she beheld Polwatzki with uplifted arm pursuing the savage of the wood—his keen spear soon brought him to the ground—He hastens to the aid of the Virgin—his sad eyes sparkling 'mid the tears of joy: Ah! merciful heav'ns! shall

I still live to guard the life of Lexina.—Her languid eyes pierc'd the heart of Polwatzki--she bent them on the ground, and the bitter tears followed—she lifted them again and grasped the hand of Polwatzki :—"Ah ! Polwatzki how couldst thou protect me against the savage of the wood--soon would my troubles have ceased, and the daughter of Winniski been but a name!—Ah cou'dst thou protect me against the frowns of a father—a murd'ring father—more obdurate is his heart than the savage of the wood :--Even now bethink thee, beloved Polwatzki, the eye of Winniski may be upon thee; his hate is implacable, and his rage as the non-controlling storm—beware not to tempt his savage heart to wrath—forever hath he forbidden thee the company of Lexina. --Fly Polwatzki, the murderer's steel waits but the nod of Winniski!" he pressed her white hand to his beating heart, " Ah ! fairest flower of the light, can thy cruel father forbid—can he restrain the heart

of Polwatzki?—What murderer's steel is like the stern behest of Winniski.—Most righteous realms of light! To thee I lift my supplicating heart—Almighty powers, that do alike uphold the lowest reptile and the highest monarch—oh! if ye so have willed to rent our virtuous loves—may the storm settle on the head of Polwatzki—but spare O, mighty powers—let no rude storm blast the flower of thy creation—let her support be thy sun—let the shower of the morn deck the bloom of the garden—let thy benignity rest on the heart of the WHITE ROSE of VILNA,--And when the ruthless hand of death shall pluck the fair flower, and the winter of life shall rest upon her—may the spring of heaven eternalize her leaves—may she bloom a sweet flower in the bosom of God"—He could say no more—tears flowed in silence from the eyes of the lovers, a rustling sound struck their ears—'twas Winnizki and the proud

Lord of Omzlaw:—Terror seized on the heart of Lexina—the look of her father struck her to the earth—firm was the soul of Polwatzki, and fortitude marked his position.—"There," said the haughty Winniski "is the foe of my peace—soon shall thy perfidious heart meet its recompence!"—He drew his keen sabre while the fire flash'd from his eye.—"No proud Lord of Winniski, my sabre seeks not thy blood—never shall the father of Lexina fall by the arm of Polwatzki.—Tremble thou tyrant of Omzlaw, thy foe bids thee defiance!"—The Lord of Omzlaw drew his bloody scimitar, dead anger sat in his gloomy eye.—They rush'd forward to engage:—The eyes of Lexina open'd again to the light—she lifted her white hands to heaven—she beheld the danger of her lover—she sprung forward in desperation—she sunk between the swords of the combatants!—The sabre of Polwatzki reek'd with the blood of Lexina—motion forsook his arm—he stood

like horror in marble!—Awful was the pause that followed!—

" Vile slave of VILNA where is thy triumph?"—said the Lord of Omzlaw--Silent was the tongue of Polwatzki—He put the hilt of his sabre to the ground—the sharp point pierc'd his agitated bosom —" Proud Lord of Winniski—Tyrant of Omzlaw, behold the triumph of Polwatzki!"

He clasped his wringing arms around the neck of Lexina, and slept on the bosom of the WHITE ROSE of VILNA!—

One grave contains the bones of the Lovers—Green is the turf that covers them.—

Sorrow rent the proud heart of Winniski—grief was the portion of his old age—unlamented was the day of his dissolution. — — —

FINIS

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THE

MAID OF DRONTHEIM.

A BALLAD,

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORSE TONGUE.

VERSES on NOVEMBER;

AND

AN ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF

SAWNEY GRANT,

LATE WRITER IN EDINBURGH:

BY J. F. DENOVAN.

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